

In the Drawings:

In compliance 37 CFR § 1.121(d), replacement sheets of corrected drawings, which will replace all previous drawings, are submitted in this amendment.

REMARKS

Claims 1-21 are pending in this application. All claims have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102. Claims 1 and 5 have been amended and claim 13 has been cancelled. Applicants request withdrawal of the rejections based on remarks that follow.

The Applicants have amended the specification to include new corrected drawings for Figures 1-8.

35 U.S.C. § 102 Rejections

Claims 1-21 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Benedict et al. "Loop Detection and Dissolution in a Focal Point Network." (USPN 5,321,812) Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection. Claims 1, 5, 14, 16 and 19 are independent claims.

Claim 1 and 16 have been amended as follow:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for reconfiguring a communication system comprising a plurality of nodes coupled by a plurality of communication links comprising:

determining that said communication system includes a closed loop topology in response to receipt of a communication at at least a first of said plurality of nodes;

at least temporarily preventing effective communication across a selected one of said plurality of communication links by deactivating at least one of said communication links to change said closed loop topology to an open topology.

16. (Currently Amended) Apparatus for reconfiguring a communication system comprising a plurality of nodes coupled by a plurality of communication links comprising:

a state machine in at least one of said plurality of nodes configured to determine that said communication system includes a closed loop topology in response to receipt of a communication at said one of said plurality of nodes;

said state machine also configured to provide a control signal to at least

temporarily prevent effective communication across a selected one of said plurality of communication links by deactivating at least one of said communication links to change said closed loop topology to an open topology.

Claim 5 has been amended as follow:

5. (Currently Amended) A method for detecting loop topology in a communication network having a plurality of nodes coupled by a plurality of links wherein each of said plurality of nodes is associated with a determinable node value comprising:

sending at least a first communication from a first node to at least a second node, said first communication including an indication of said node value of said first node;

said second node receiving said communication from said first node which includes a received node value and comparing said received node value to a first node value which is the node value of said second node, said second node outputting a signal indicative of a closed loop topology when said received node value equals said first node value,

wherein said step of sending said first communication from said first node is performed in response to a change in the number of nodes or links in the system.

Claim 13 as originally submitted recited a similar element.

It is respectfully submitted that the Benedict et al. reference fails to disclose all recited elements of claim 1, 14, 16 and 19. Claims 1 and 16 have been amended to recite "at least temporarily preventing effective communication across a selected one of said plurality of communication links by deactivating at least one of said communication links to change said closed loop topology to an open topology."

While the reference may describe the dissolution of the server/served relationship between a focal point and a non-focal point upon finding a loop-detect message (Col 6, Line 64-68) the reference does not specify "preventing effective communication" across a "communication link." Nor does the reference specify "deactivating at least one of said communication links." Revoking a server/served relationship between a focal and a non-focal point does not necessarily prevent communication across a communication link between two nodes since the "server/served relationship is limited to a particular type of management service;

e.g. the handling of Alerts.” “Different sets of server/served relationships may exist concurrently between the same nodes for different types of management services.” (Benedict, Col 4, Lines 12-16) The revocation of a server/served relationship, as described by the reference, merely refers to the termination of a specific management service – other management services between the two nodes are still available and there is still effective communication between the nodes. This is distinguishable from the present invention which, in one embodiment, deactivates a port associated with a communication link, thereby preventing effective communication between the nodes.

Claims 14 and 19 both recite “deactivating at least a first communication link to provide a system having an open topology with no isolated nodes; detecting effective loss of a communication link; and reactivating first communication link.” The Applicants respectfully submit that the Benedict reference fails to disclose all recited claim elements. While the reference may describe active/inactive functional “relationships” between network nodes (Col 5, Lines 5-10), this is not the same as active/inactive communication links between nodes. Nor does the reference describe “detecting effective loss of a communication link.” Although the reference may describe a focal point management services program (FPMS) that “controls the type of focal point node role being assumed by the local node and the types of network management services being provided by the node,” (Col 5, Lines 13-18) the program does not deactivate, reactivate, or detect status of communication links between network nodes. Nothing in Benedict suggests that the described loop detection and associated techniques are applicable outside of the focal point or management services context.

Claim 5 has been amended to incorporate elements previously set forth in claim 13. Although Benedict may describe that the “given node responds to the establishment of another node as a new server node by creating a loop-detection message,” (Col 2, Lines 47-51) Benedict does not suggest the sending of a communication upon the removal of a node. Neither does Benedict suggest the sending of a communication upon changes in the number of links in the system.

Conclusion

Applicants believe that all pending claims are allowable and respectfully request a Notice of Allowance for this application from the Examiner. Should the Examiner believe that a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of this application, the undersigned can be reached at the telephone number set out below.

Respectfully submitted,
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